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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 002916

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/PPD MICHELLE LOGSDON AND MICHAEL HURLEY,  
EUR/PBI FOR IVAN WEINSTEIN  
R FOR ACTING UNDER SECRETARY HARRISON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPAO](#) [KDEM](#) [OIIP](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [EUN](#) [OEXC](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: MUSLIM OUTREACH WORLDWIDE

REF: STATE 155954 (C)

1. Embassy Madrid welcomes this Muslim Outreach initiative and provides the following information about our outreach efforts:

2. Brief Context for Muslim Outreach efforts in Spain: An estimated 500,000 to one million Muslims live in Spain. Almost all are of foreign origin, with only about 3,000 being Spaniards who have converted to Islam. Approximately 60 percent of them are of Moroccan origin, with the next largest population from Algeria. In Catalunya, there is an important Pakistani community. In the Community of Madrid, there are 55 mosques. The Muslim community assumed tremendous importance following the terrorist attacks of March 11, 2004 on a Spanish commuter train which killed 191 people. 50 people have been arrested in connection with the attacks, the majority of them Muslims of Moroccan origin. The Spanish Government has realized that they must reach out to their Muslim population, and have proposed a series of initiatives including subsidizing mosques, to wean them from foreign financing; registering Imams, and requiring them to preach their sermons in Spanish; and teaching Islam (under the rubric of comparative religion) in the public schools.

3. Embassy Madrid Programs: In addition to the programs listed below, the Embassy recently created a Muslim Outreach Working Group, chaired by the DCM. At its first meeting, the Group commissioned a study by PA's Information Resource Center on the Islamic Community in Spain. This 103 page report is now completed and has been distributed to the Working Group members. It provides background on the Islamic Community in Spain, and lists influential institutions and individuals with whom the Embassy should initiate or maintain contact. The following is a status report on outreach programs to the Muslim Community:

Description/Name of Activity: Meetings with Spanish Muslim Federation

Audience: Spokesman for large Spanish Islamic organization

Category: Image of the US

Responsible Section: POL

Timeframe: Ongoing

Budget and Account: Meal per diem for lunches

Results: Obtained information on Islamic community issues for use in annual Religious Freedom Report. Exchanged ideas regarding US foreign policy, specifically towards Israel. Was able to explain USG objectives in the Middle East and discuss how Spanish Muslims may play a role in sharing their belief in democracy with other Islamic governments or organizations. As a result, spokesman has expressed an interest in attending the January, 2004 "Networking the Western Democracies with the Arab World" conference in Berlin

Description/Name of Activity: Meetings with Muslim community and political leaders in Ceuta

Audience: Calls on Muslim political and community leaders

Category: Image of the US

Responsible Section: POL

Timeframe: Completed November 2002.

Budget and Account: \$1000 for travel and per diem

Results: Exchange of views with Muslim community and political leaders. Anti-US feeling had been evident in Ceuta. About a third of the est 70,000 population of Ceuta, adjacent to Morocco, is Muslim.

Description/Name of Activity: U.S. Speaker Arab-American writer Elmaz Abinader

Audience: academics, community activists, journalists

Category: Image of the U.S.

Responsible Section: PA

Time Frame: completed; April 2003

Budget and Account: speaker travel, per diem, and honoraria (\$6,000)

Results: Abinader participated in the national bi-annual gathering of the Spanish Association of American Studies. She also spoke to a group of Islamic studies scholars and community activists about tolerance and diversity.

Description/Name of Activity: U.S. Speaker Felicity Galerday on Islamic Community in the U.S.

Audience: Spanish-speaking Muslims  
Category: Image of the U.S.  
Responsible Section: PA  
Time Frame: completed; April 2003  
Budget and Account: partial per diem and honorarium \$1500  
Results: The speaker participated in an international conference of Spanish-speaking Muslims (Islam on the Two Banks) in Sevilla

Description/Name of Activity: Distribution of Pamphlet "Muslim Life in America"  
Audience: Academics and Journalists  
Category: Image of the U.S.  
Responsible Section: PA  
Time Frame: completed spring 2003  
Budget and Account: 0  
Results:

Description/Name of Activity: Visa briefing on new regulations and procedures  
Audience: academic exchange groups, government officials  
Category: Image of the U.S., security  
Responsible Section: CONS/PA  
Time Frame: completed; May 2003  
Budget and Account: 0  
Results:

Description/Name of Activity: Ambassador's Iftaar Letter to Muslim Ambassadors in Spain  
Audience: Islamic diplomatic community  
Category: Image of the U.S., security  
Responsible Section: EXEC/PA  
Time Frame: completed fall 2002  
Budget and Account: 0  
Results:

Description/Name of Activity: Voluntary Visitor Program with Islamic Members of "No a Racismo" anti-racism coalition  
Audience: Spanish Muslims  
Category: Image of the U.S.  
Responsible Section: PA  
Time Frame: pending  
Budget and Account: n/a  
Results:

Description/Name of Activity: Assistance in establishing multi-lingual radio for Madrid's immigrant community  
Audience: Spanish Muslims  
Category: Image of the U.S.  
Responsible Section: PA  
Time Frame: pending  
Budget and Account: 0  
Results:

MANZANARES